

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PRAGUE 0707

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SOPN, CZ

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON RUDE PRAVO DEPUTY EDITOR

USIA FOR IEU-SHIRLEY

1. SUMMARY: IN WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST DETAILED DISCUSSION TO DATE OF CHARTER 77-RELATED EVENTS, AMBASSADOR AND RUDE PRAVO'S DEPUTY EDITOR EXCHANGE VIEWS. BERLIN CP MEETING AND EUROCOMMUNISM ARE OTHER TOPICS.

PRESS QUESTIONS:

2. THE AMBASSADOR, ACCOMPANIED BY PAO VISITED RUDE PRAVO DEPUTY EDITOR ZDENEK HORENI MARCH 15. MUCH OF THE HOUR AND ONE-HALF MEETING WAS DEVOTED TO DISCUSSION OF CHARTER 77 EVENTS. HORENI, DEPUTY AND CONFIDENT OF FM, SAID DEPARTMENT'S JANUARY STATEMENT ON CZECHOSLOVAKIA CAN BE SEEN "IN NO OTHER WAY THAN AS INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND HAS ADDED A QUITE NEW DIMENSION IN OUR RELATIONS." AMBASSADOR MADE THREE INITIAL POINTS:

(A) HOSTILITY OF CZECHOSLOVAK PRESS TOWARD U.S. HAD BEEN DESCRIBED TO HIM AS BEING MOST PRONOUNCED IN EASTERN EUROPE, AND THIS HAS BEEN THE CASE;

(B) GOC ANTI-U.S. POLICY IN THIS REGARD HAS BEEN COUNTERPRODUCTIVE
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BECAUSE IT HAS NOT CAUSED CONGRESS OR THE EXECUTIVE TO CHANGE THEIR POSITIONS ON CZECHOSLOVAK-RELATED ISSUES, QUITE THE CONTRARY;
AND (C) RECENT GOC TREATMENT OF U.S. JOURNALISTS IS LAMENTABLE AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE PRESENTED AS SUCH BY EMBASSY TO MFA.

3. HORENI SAID CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S HISTORICAL TIES WITH U.S. ARE DEEP AND BASICALLY POSITIVE, BUT "NATURALLY WE LIVE IN A DIVIDED WORLD."

HE BACKED OFF QUESTION OF JOURNALISTS TREATMENT, AMBASSADOR HAVING REMINDED HIM OF USG'S CONSCIOUS DECISION NOT TO RESPOND ACCORDINGLY AS YET WITH CZECHOSLOVAK JOURNALISTS IN U.S., DESPITE AMERICAN LAW CALLING FOR RECIPROCITY IN GRANTING OF VISAS.

4. ON HUMAN RIGHTS, AMBASSADOR CALLED HORENI'S ATTENTION TO ARTICLES 7 AND 10 OF CSCE FINAL DOCUMENT, REFERRING TO BOTH HUMAN FREEDOMS, AND RESPONSIBILITY OF COUNTRIES SUBSCRIBING TO FINAL ACT TO IMPLEMENT IT.

CHARTER 77

5. SPECIFICALLY ON CHARTER 77, HORENI SAID GOC STRATEGY WOULD BE TO "ISOLATE" CHARTER SIGNERS FROM POPULATION. AMBASSADOR ASKED HOW, BY PROPAGANDA, PRISON, EXILE OR WHAT?

6. HORENI SAID THAT CHARTER SIGNERS WOULD BE BOTH IGNORED BY PUBLIC AND SUBJECT TO CZECHOSLOVAK LAW. HE DID NOT RULE OUT POSSIBILITY OF FUTURE TRIALS, NOR DID HE COMMENT ON RUMOR OF POSSIBLE GOC FUTURE STRATEGY OF DENYING CHARTER SIGNERS ACCESS TO PRAGUE.

7. AMBASSADOR ASKED IF EDITOR BELIEVED CHARTER DOCUMENT WAS ILLEGAL, SINCE IT APPEALED TO BOTH EXISTING CZECHOSLOVAK LAWS AND HELSINKI CSCE FINAL ACT. HORENI SAID IT WAS ILLEGAL BECAUSE IT EMANATED FROM AN ORGANIZED MOVEMENT NOWHERE REGISTERED UNDER CZECHOSLOVAK LAW, "THEREFORE IT IS AN ILLEGAL PAMPHLET."

8. HORENI MADE FREQUENT REFERENCES TO '68 EVENTS. SAID SOON GOC CONFIDENTIAL

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WOULD COMMEMORATE BIRTH OF ITS 15 MILLIONTH CITIZEN. "YOU HAVE 15 MILLION PEOPLE WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND A HANDFUL OF COUNTERREVOLUTIONARIES ON THE OTHER SIDE". "NO ONE WILL BE IN THEIR WAY IF THEY WANT TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY," HE SAID, ADDING THAT HUSAK POLICY WOULD REMAIN BASICALLY WHAT IT HAS BEEN; I.E., NO REVENGE SEEKING, OFFERING POSSIBILITIES OF RECONCILIATION, GENEROSITY, AS IN '69, "BUT OUR LAWS MUST BE OBSERVED TOO. NO CHARTER SIGNERS WERE ARRESTED FOR SIGNING THE CHARTER AS SUCH, SOME WERE ARRESTED FOR AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT MATTER. THE FACT THAT SIGNERS WERE NOT ARRESTED, DOESN'T MEAN THAT THEY CAN'T BE ARRESTED IN THE FUTURE FOR OTHER CHARGES, SUCH AS "ESPIONAGE" HE ADDED. AMBASSADOR SAID, IF CHARTER WAS NOT AN EVENT OF MUCH SIGNIFICANCE, WHY DID GOC ACT SO FORCEFULLY TOWARD IT? HORENI SAID REACTION WAS NOT AIMED AT SIGNERS PER SE, BUT TOWARD CHALLENGE TO CZECHOSLOVAK POLITICAL SYSTEM. RESPONSE WAS IN PROPORTION TO CHALLENGE, HE TOLD VISITORS.

PATOCKA DEATH

9. ON RECENT DEATH OF CHARTER SPOKESMAN JAN PATOCKA, HORENI SAID "WHO COULD NOT MOURN HIS DEATH AS A PERSON, BUT IT IS NOT ETHICAL FOR THE WESTERN PRESS TO BLAME HIS DEATH ON US. I HAVE READ THE LETTER PROF. PATOCKA WROTE TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAYING THAT THE DUTCH JOURNALISTS TOOK HIM FROM HIS BED AGAINST HIS WILL TO MEET NETHERLANDS FOREIGN MINISTER VAN DE STOEL AND HENCE THE CONFRONTATION. WHO IS AT FAULT IN PROF. PATOCKA'S DEATH AT THIS TIME?"

EAST BERLIN CP MEETING

10. ON THE JULY MEETING OF COMMUNIST PARTIES IN EAST BERLIN, HORENI, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION FROM THE AMBASSADOR, SAID IT WAS SUCCESSFUL IN GIVING EUROPEAN POLITICAL GROUPS NEW HORIZONS IN THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACEFUL EVOLUTION, SO "AMERICAN SOLDIERS CAN SPEND PLEASANT EVENINGS IN GERMAN BARS AND NOT HAVE TO DIE." HE SAID CONFERENCE WAS IN REACTION TO PRESENT EUROPEAN ECONOMIC CONFIDENTIAL

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CRISIS OF CAPITALISM, WHICH EASTERN BLOC SEES AS GREATEST SINCE DEPRESSION OF 1930S, AND HENCE ITS CONCERN THAT NO NEW WAR OR EMERGENCE OF FACISTIC POLITICAL SYSTEMS EMERGE. "NO NEW HITLER, NO NEW FRANCO," HE SAID. AMBASSADOR ADDED, "NO NEW STALIN AS WELL?" EDITOR BACKED WATER A BIT ON THAT ONE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 PRAGUE 0707

EUROCOMMUNISM

11. PAO ASKED IF HORENI, WHO PERSONALLY COVERED THE BERLIN MEETING, SAW ITALIAN, FRENCH, AND SPANISH COMMUNIST PARTIES AS EMERGING INCREASINGLY ALONG NATIONALISTIC LINES? HORENI SAID, "NATIONAL COMMUNISM DOES NOT EXIST. IT IS A WHIP OF SAND, COMMUNISM CAN ONLY EXIST AS AN INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT, ALTHOUGH INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM NO LONGER HAS AN IDEOLOGICAL OR GEOGRAPHIC CENTER." AMBASSADOR ASKED EDITOR IF HE SAW THIS AS AN EVOLUTION FROM MOSCOW CONTROL OF WORLD COMMUNIST MOVEMENT.

PAO ASKED IF EDITOR THEN WAS SAYING THAT AS AN ISSUE "INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIANISM" IS EFFECTIVELY DEAD. HORENI SCRAMBLED SIDEWAYS AND TREATED HIS VISITORS TO A SPRAY OF HISTORICAL AND RHETORICAL ARGUMENTS.

PLURALISM

12. AMBASSADOR, IN CLOSING, ASKED IF HORENI SAW PLURALISM DEVELOPING IN INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT; I.E., IF THERE COULD BE A VARIETY OF COMMUNIST POSITIONS POSSIBLE IN WESTERN EUROPE ON NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS, WOULDN'T THAT BE POSSIBLE IN EASTERN EUROPE AS WELL? HORENI SAID THERE COULD BE "NO SUCH DEVELOPMENT IN SOCIALIST EASTERN EUROPE. WE HAD

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A PERIOD OF PLURAL RESPONSES TO NAZIISM IN WORLD WAR II, BUT NOW THE PROCESS OF CONSOLIDATION IS COMPLETED."

13. BIODATA: IN HIS LATER 40S, HORENI HAS, DURING THE PAST YEAR, EMERGED INCREASINGLY AS THE PERSON WHO ACCOMPANIES TOP PARTY DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL OR BLOC CONFERENCES TO ELUCIDATE THE PARTY POSITION TO CZECHOSLOVAK MEDIA. HE IS ARTICULATE, GLIB, A SMOOTH AND SKILLED DEBATER, LACING FRONTAL PROBES WITH HUMOR AND SWITCHING BETWEEN HISTORICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT WHEN IT IS TO HIS ADVANTAGE.

14. COMMENT: THIS WAS A FRANK AND WIDE-RANGING DISCUSSION AND, DESPITE THE SENSITIVITY OF THE ISSUES DEALT WITH, BASICALLY POSITIVE, AND NOT WITHOUT HUMOR AT TIMES. MEMCON FOLLOWS. BYRNE

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